

THE BRASHER BULLETIN

Newsletter of the Society of
Private and Pioneer Numismatics

S. P. P. N.



Vol. 2 No. 2

A Newsletter of the Society of Private and
Pioneer Numismatics (S.P.P.N.)

The Society of Private and Pioneer Numismatics is a collector-based organization devoted to the education and enjoyment of the private and pioneer gold coinage of the western and southeastern United States. Members of the Society are also collectors and students of small denomination "fractional" gold coinage of California, gold souvenir tokens, and western mining or banking scrip.

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VOLUME 2 NUMBER 2

FALL 1989

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EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS

I wish to thank everyone for their patience and support during the delay in producing this issue of the Brasher Bulletin. The editor's extended trip to Australia combined with various delays held up the scheduled printing until December. My resolution for the new year is to issue one Brasher Bulletin every three months. Of course I will need your necessary cooperation in the form of news notes and articles of interest to the membership.

Much has been written recently in the numismatic press concerning the salvage of the S.S. Central America. A rich cargo is being brought up from this wreck that will have a significant impact on the numismatic market. Among the rolls of uncirculated San Francisco mint double eagles are unknown numbers of rare private gold coins. Reports suggest a high state of preservation for the S.F. mint coins. If the same holds true for the private gold, it could change the rarity estimates and reports of finest known specimens. No mention has been made of California Small Denomination Gold coins. Such small coins could be easily overlooked in the initial salvage operation and search for more rolls of coins. Careful screening of sediments may reveal their presence as part of the sunken cargo.

There are several articles of note in this issue. Don Kagin's revision of his work on private gold coinage begins with this issue and include the coins of Templeton Reid and the Bechtlers. Don plans to provide additional information on other series in future issues. Jack Tothoroh's comments on the Jascha Heifetz collection provide insight into current market conditions. Jay Roe continues his series of articles on new varieties of California Gold. Jeff Rock has written his first article for the B.B. on private gold literature which will appear in parts over the next couple of issues. The results of the membership survey are also included in this issue, and they seem to confirm the direction that the Society is taking is supported by the members.

The Society will soon elect officers. Anyone wishing to become involved in the Society in an official capacity should let me know by letter before February 1, 1990, so that the nominating committee can begin making recommendations for various offices. The Society of Private and Pioneer Numismatics will hold a meeting on February 2, 1990 at the Long Beach Expo in California. In addition to an educational program, a discussion of upcoming elections and other news and events will occupy the members. Members and guests are invited to attend.

I encourage all members to become involved in the Society through their participation as officers and contributions to the Brasher Bulletin. I ask that each of you consider sharing your knowledge with others having a similar avocation.

THE JASCHA HEIFETZ COLLECTION SALE

By Jack Totheroh

The Jascha Heifetz Collection, auctioned by Superior Galleries on October 1, 2, 3, 1989, included the last major offering of California Small Denomination Gold in the decade of the 1980's. As stated in the Superior catalog, "The first session starts off with Mr. Heifetz's most cherished possession: his California Fractional Gold." Added to this were three other consignments, including many items by Jay Roe, making an offering of 420 pieces, not including tokens. It was equal in quality to the Lee Sale of a year previous. Bids were not as strong and collectors were able to acquire many items at bargain prices. The entire offering of the Period I coins could have been purchased for less than \$ 100,000 including the 10% commission.

The California Small Denomination Gold session was held Sunday morning October 1. It was attended by 25 bidders. The large majority of these were collectors who found time before and after the session to get acquainted and exchange information. Jay Roe was interviewed by the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner. He provided some of the historical background of the series as well as expressing the opinion that California Small Denomination Gold was the least known and most undervalued series in numismatic circles. This has obviously been to the advantage of those who are collectors.

There were several relatively new collectors who were able to add quality coins to their collections. The liveliest bidding was for the 1853, round quarter dollar B.G. 218 at \$ 11,000 plus 10%. This was the first one to be offered at auction this decade. Surprisingly the round half dollars, B.G. 412 and 424 went for \$ 9500 and \$ 9000 respectively. It was thought that they would bring higher prices.

It will be interesting to see what the decade of the 1990's will hold for us. Certainly it will not be more exciting than the 1980's which introduced the two editions of Doering's "California Fractional Gold"; the Breen-Gillio "California Pioneer Fractional Gold"; the many auctions including the collections of Brand, Doering, Steinmetz, Lee, and Heifetz; the discovery of several new varieties to whet our enthusiasm; and finally the creation of our own Society of Private and Pioneer Numismatics including the publication of the "Brasher Bulletin."



PRIVATE GOLD COINS AND PATTERNS OF THE U.S.

By Donald Kagin

It has been almost ten years since I completed my original research on what was to become "Private Gold Coins & Patterns of the U.S." In the interim amazingly few new discoveries have been unearthed (some literally) in this fascinating series. While very little new information has been found concerning the various coining companies in the last decade, a number of new coins have surfaced and should be recorded. It is to this end that I intend to write a supplement on the rarity and value of private gold coins and patterns.

Because the "Brasher Bulletin" is the only publication which is devoted to disseminating information exclusively about private gold coins, I believe it to be the appropriate vehicle to carry my initial articles.

This issue will preview this information commencing with the issues of Templeton Reid and the Bechtlers. The numbers on the left-hand column are my catalog numbers from "Private Gold Coins & Patterns of the U.S."

TEMPLETON REID

1.	1830	\$ 2½	RE (Reeded Edge)	Rarity: R6	16 Known
2.	1830	\$ 5	RE	Rarity: R7	7 Known
3.	1830	\$ 10	PE (Plain Edge)	Rarity: High R7	6 Known
4.	1830	\$ 10	RE	Rarity: R8	3 Known

THE BECHTLERS

1.	(1831-1834)	\$ 1	RE	Rarity: Low R5	
2.	(1834-1837)	\$ 1	RE	Rarity: R7	9 Known
3.	(1834-1837)	\$ 1	RE	Rarity: R6	
4.	(1837-1842)	\$ 1	PE	Rarity: R5	
5.	(1831-1834)	\$ 2½	RE	Rarity: R7	8 Known
6.	(1831-1834)	\$ 2½	RE	Rarity: High R7	6 Known
7.	(1831-1834)	\$ 2½	PE	Rarity: R8	2 Known
8.	(1831-1834)	\$ 2½	RE	Rarity: R7	9 Known
9.	(1831-1834)	\$ 2½	RE	Rarity: High R7	6 Known

10. (1837-1842) \$ 2½ PE (Plain Edge) Rarity: R6
11. (1837-1842) \$ 2½ PE Rarity: R6
12. (1837-1842) \$ 2½ PE Rarity: R7 9 Known
13. (1837-1842) \$ 2½ PE Rarity: R6
14. (1831-1834) \$ 5 RE (Reeded Edge) Rarity: High R7 4 Known
15. (1831-1834) \$ 5 RE Rarity: High R6 13 Known
- 15A. (1834-1837) \$ 5 RE Rarity: Unique



15A has a similar obverse to Kagin 16 but the unique (B1) reverse reads:

BECHTLER AT RUTHERFORD 8.99 grams

16. (1834-1837) \$ 5 RE Rarity: R8
C. BECHTLER; no period after RUTHERFORD
- 16A. (1834-1837) \$ 5 PE Rarity: Unique
Similar to Kagin 16 but with plain edge
17. (1834-1837) \$ 5 PE Rarity: R5
REC. C. BECHTLER; period after RUTHERFORD
18. (1834-1837) \$ 5 PE Rarity: High R7 4 Known
19. (1834-1837) \$ 5 PE Rarity: Low R7 10 Known
20. (1837-1842) \$ 5 PE Rarity: Low R5
- 20A. (1837-1842) \$ 5 PE Rarity: Unique
21. (1837-1842) \$ 5 PE Rarity: High R7 6 Known
22. (1837-1842) \$ 5 PE Rarity: High R6 14 Known
23. (1837-1842) \$ 5 PE Rarity: High R6

A. BECHTLER

24.	(1842-1852)	\$ 1	PE (Plain Edge)	Rarity: High R3	
25.	(1842-1852)	\$ 1	RE (Reeded Edge)	Rarity: Unique	
26.	(1842-1852)	\$ 5	RE	Rarity: R8	2 Known
27.	(1842-1852)	\$ 5	RE	Rarity: R5	
28.	(1842-1852)	\$ 5	RE	Rarity: R5	
29.	(1842-1852)	\$ 5	RE	Rarity: Low R7	
30.	(1842-1852)	\$ 5	PE	Rarity: Low R7	10 Known (Restrike)
31.	(1842-1852)	\$ 5	RE	Rarity: Low R7	9 Known (Restrike)

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NEW FRONTIER & DEVIERY PERIOD I QUARTERS

By Jay Roe

The discovery of new varieties of California Pioneer Fractional Gold is one of the challenges for the collector of this lovely series of rare gold coins. The same Narrow Head obverse die was used by F & D for B.G. 203 and 204. This same obverse die has also been used on two unlisted varieties described below.

At Kurt Krueger's 1984 ANA auction in Detroit, Lot 2812 was listed (but not illustrated) as an unlisted variety ex Burnie. Indeed, is it listed in Burnie as No. 13 on p. 14 where it is labelled "unique". In Fact it is a mule with the obverse of B.G. 204 and the reverse of B.G. 206. I purchased this on behalf of a well-known collector of California Fractional Gold for the ludicrously low price of \$ 176. Today this coin would easily bring \$ 2000-3000. It has been given number B.G. 204A

At the Mid-America G.N.A. Sale in May 1989, Lot 1696 is another new mule using the same obverse die of B.G. 204, but this time it is mated to the reverse die of B.G. 1308 ! Because of proper cataloging with Tom Mulvaney's excellent photography, this coin was purchased by me at a price more appropriate to its rarity.

This brings up the question of the status of B.G. 1308 which I purchased at a nice four-figure price from a collector who had bought it from a coin dealer for well under \$ 100 (once again proving that knowledge is power and that the astute collector can sometimes make out like a tiger). Since the reverse of B.G. 1308 is now documented as Frontier & Diviercy's, I suggest that B.G. 1308 now be reclassified as an F & D Period I original coin.

(B.G. 204/1308 is shown on the front and back covers)

S.P.P.N. MEMBERSHIP SURVEY REPORT

Last June the editor conducted a survey of the membership concerning the content, advertising policy, and format of the Brasher Bulletin. In all 27 members responded to the survey and the results are summarized below. The raw scores did not always total 27 because some members selected to answer only particular questions. Each item was rated on a one to five scale, with one being the highest.

1.A. Type of articles to be published

The membership preferred original research articles (21 first place votes) followed by information on new varieties (10 votes), with the other categories receiving roughly equal scores (7-8 votes). Other types of recommended articles include photography techniques, "fun" interesting stories, information on striking characteristics, and summaries of the Society's meetings.

1.B. Advertising

The members overwhelmingly want advertising with only one negative vote, but it should be restricted to private gold only. The vote was evenly spread among the alternatives including free space for members, allowing dealer advertising, and paid space to members only.

1.C. Newsletter format

The members rejected the folded newspaper, small format, and journal formats and voted (21 first place votes) to keep the present format and style.

2.A. Meeting locations

The selection of meeting locations naturally reflected the regional makeup of the membership with 18 first place votes going to a West Coast location followed by 7 votes for the Midwest. The Southeast and East each received only 2 votes, but received a much higher scores as second or third choices for meeting sites.

2.B. Number of meeting per year

The membership was split on the desired number of meetings per year with 4 votes for all major shows, 3 votes for quarterly meetings and twice a year meetings, and others suggesting specific show locations. Potential meeting sites include FUN, Central States, Long Beach Expo, and both annual ANA shows.

The S.P.P.N. By-Laws passed by a 27 to 1 margin. The one negative voter felt that a quorum of 12 would be too many. Others suggested several changes or corrections including extending the charter membership until 1990 and distinguishing the Society Executive Committee from the Board of Governors. These and other suggested changes may be brought up at the next general membership meeting (see below).

In summary, the survey reflects the diverse views of the membership, and several good suggestions for improvement have been noted. The results of the survey will be used to guide the policy of the Brasher Bulletin. The information contained in the survey will be turned over to the new Society officers when they are elected.

The editor wishes to thank everyone who participated in the survey and is expecting further comments in the future in order to improve the style and content of the Brasher Bulletin.

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ATTENTION: THE NEXT MEETING OF THE S.P.P.N. WILL BE AT THE LONG BEACH EXPO ON FEBRUARY 2, 1990, AT 5 PM.

PLEASE BE IN ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING IF YOU WILL BE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AT THAT TIME. WE PLAN TO DISCUSS SEVERAL TOPICS OF INTEREST, PLAN FOR THE SOCIETY'S ELECTION OF OFFICERS, AND VIEW AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ON CALIFORNIA SMALL DENOMINATION GOLD.

REMEMBER: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1990
5:00 PM
LONG BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

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NUMISMATIC LITERATURE FOR PIONEER AND TERRITORIAL GOLD

by Jeff Rock

For many collectors of pioneer and territorial gold coins, the problem often arises of trying to figure out what has been written about pieces in ones collection. True, there are a few standard texts and common-place references, but these often cannot tell the whole story. There are many monographs and general-reference works that have been published about these historic issues, but many may be missing from the libraries of collectors, simply because their existence may not be generally known.

This article is similar to an article that I wrote several years ago for the Early American Coppers club, and which was published in their house journal, *Penny-Wise*. Because of the incredible number of books, monographs, auction catalogues and articles appearing in newspapers, magazines, club journals and private publications, the scope of this article had to be severely limited. The following listings include only books and monographs that were printed for sale to the public, as well as articles that may have appeared in magazines, etc., but that were later reprinted, and issued as a separate volume.

For collectors with an interest in the many thousands of pieces not fitting into this category, I'd like to suggest a few sources of information that are available. The first is *Numismatic Literature*, a publication of the American Numismatic Society with over 120 numbers printed. This valuable work describes publications covering the gamut of numismatics. Another valuable source is Elvira Clain-Stefanelli's *Numismatic Bibliography*, which is described in detail below. By far the largest bibliography of numismatic works, it even includes sections on auction catalogues. The third, and possibly the most profitable source, is to check out the bibliography sections of some of the already published reference works. Walter Breen's *Encyclopedia*, and the Don Kagan work, both listed below, have large bibliographies, and list many titles that have never appeared at auctions of numismatic literature.

The listings in this article will follow the same general format of author, title, place of publication and/or publisher, date of publication, number of pages, information on illustrations, a brief description of the contents of the work and an opinion (strictly this authors!) of the usefulness or desirability of the work, information on later editions or reprints, and, finally, a rough idea of what the particular book sells for (based primarily on auction records and private sales).

That this article contains errors and omissions, I do not doubt. If there are any readers who have comments, corrections, or questions, I can be reached at Box 3447, San Diego, CA 92103. If there are enough corrections, a follow-up article will be prepared for *The Brasher Bulletin*.



Adams, Edgar H., *Official Premium List of United States Private and Territorial Gold Coins*, New York, NY, 1909, 72 pages, many line drawings by Walter Blythe.

Although this work was long touted as just a price guide, there is a wealth of additional information, especially in the areas of private and territorial gold, which were one of Adams' specialties. Highly recommended. In the past decade a small hoard of the softcover edition has been found, enabling collectors to purchase examples of what was once a very scarce book for around \$20. A very limited edition was issued bound in maroon hard covers and interleaved pages. These generally command upwards of \$100. A reprint was prepared in 1977 by Willett, New York, NY. The reprint fetches around \$10.

Adams, Edgar H., *Private Gold Coinage of California. I The State Assay Office of California, 1850. II. The Moffat & Co. Issues. San Francisco, 1849-1853. III. Various California Private Mints. 1849-1855. IV. Pattern and Experimental Pieces of California. 1849-1853.* American Numismatic Society, New York, NY, 1911-12, 4 parts, 110 total pages, 7 plates of coins and 4 portrait plates.

Originally appearing in *The American Journal of Numismatics*, a small number of copies were printed of each of the four parts. The most thorough look at pioneer gold, including pattern issues, published at the time, and long the standard reference for the series. Complete sets of all four parts are scarce, and have realized over \$200 at auction. In 1913, Adams made some minor corrections and revisions, and offered the work bound in maroon cloth, as one volume. This edition, now entitled *Private Gold Coinage of California, 1849-55, its History and its Issues*, contains a 20-page introduction by Adams. These are also quite scarce, and have brought around \$150-200. Later editions have an expanded 28-page introduction, and have sold as high as \$150. In 1975, Stackpole Numismatic Books, Harrisburg, PA, issued a 110-page reprint, though neither form of the Introduction was included. These reprints sell for around \$20.

Adams, Eugene H., et al., *The Pioneer Western Bank--First of Denver, 1860-1980*, Denver, CO, 1984, 219 pages, illustrations throughout text.

A thorough look at this historic bank, from its days as Clark, Gruber & Co., issuer of many private gold coins and patterns, down to the present day. Well written, with an abundance of photographs never before published. Still available for around \$25.

Adams, John W., *United States Numismatic Literature, Volume 1, 19th Century Auction Catalogues*, 1982, 271 pages, illustrations.

A survey of early coin dealers and the auctions they conducted. Each auction is assigned grades, according to the contents of various collecting fields. The biographies and sketches of some of the famous names of the past make for very interesting reading. Although it may seem a bit pricey at \$85, I highly recommend it for all collectors interested in the early history of our hobby. Limited edition of 500 copies, the majority of which have long since been sold.

American Numismatic Society, *Catalogue of the Collection of Gold Coins in the Cabinet of the American Numismatic Society*, New York, NY, 1909, 19 pages, no illustrations.

A brief listing of the gold coins in the collection of the ANS, with no great details in any area. The catalogue was mainly produced to show what the ANS was lacking in the area of gold coinage, and members were duly implored to fill in the gaps, or to contribute funds to purchase the missing specimens. Although not of much use to the researcher, the book is quite scarce, and usually sells for around \$35.

American Numismatic Society, *Exhibition of United States and Colonial Coins*, New York, NY, 1914, 134 pages, 39 superb plates.

One of the finest numismatic exhibitions ever held, with pieces loaned from some of the most prominent collections of the era. Included were **four** 1804 dollars, a Brasher doubloon, several unique colonials, patterns and territorial pieces. An absolutely indispensable guide for tracing pedigrees, since each coin is keyed to its owner. A very high quality publication, and quite scarce as is most early ANS material. Currently selling in the \$125-150 range, well below its value as a research tool.

Andrist, Ralph, *The California Gold Rush*, American Heritage Publishing Co., New York, NY, 1961, illustrated.

One of the few works not actually owned or seen by this author, this work has been described as an overview of the gold rush days, with not too many areas covered in great detail. Pioneer gold coins and ingots are mentioned, but nothing new is presented for the numismatist. Copies should be available for around \$15 or so.

Attinelli, Emanuel Joseph, *Numisgraphics, or A List of Catalogues in Which Occur Coins or Medals, Which Have Been Sold by Auction in the United States, Also a List of Catalogues or Price Lists of Coins Issued by Dealers, Also a List of Various Publications of More or Less Interest to Numisgraphics Which Have Been published in the United States*, New York, NY, 1876, 123 pages.

Although eagerly sought by collectors of numismatic literature, this work is quite valuable to researchers in almost any area of numismatics, as it provides the name(s) of consignors to the various sales, as well as an abundance of obscure information not found elsewhere. Less than fifty originals were printed, and fewer than half that number still survive. Prices for this work are not commensurate with its rarity, generally being around \$1500. In 1976, Quarterman Publications issued a reprint which features a foreword and rarity guide by noted collector John W. Adams. The reprint, published under the much shorter title, *A Bibliography of American Numismatic Auction Catalogues, 1828-1875*, is now out of print, and generally sells for \$30.

Barfield, Rodney and Strawn, Keith, *The Bechtlers and Their Coinage. North Carolina Mini Masters of Pioneer Gold*, North Carolina Museum of History, 1980, 65 pages, halftones throughout.

A thorough look at the lives of the various members of the Bechtler family, and their accomplishments, both numismatic and non-numismatic. A catalogue of the Bechtler coinage, illustrated with specimens owned by the North Carolina Museum of History is presented, along with diagnostics of genuine pieces. A very useful reference, softbound versions are available for around \$15. A small number of hardbound copies were also issued, and are selling for \$25-30.

Bowers, Q. David, *Abe Kosoff: Dean of Numismatics*, Bowers and Merena Galleries, Wolfeboro, NH, 1985, 351 pages, numerous halftones throughout the text.

Bowers, as usual, delivers a thoroughly readable, completely enjoyable book. Kosoff, who started in 1929 as a small-time dealer eventually ended up as one of the most successful coin dealers of all time, handling virtually every rarity in the U.S. series, with special emphasis on private and territorial gold and U.S. patterns. Limited edition of only 500 copies. Available from the publisher at around \$20, and well worth the price.

Bowers, Q. David, *Adventures with Rare Coins*, Los Angeles, CA, 1979, 305 pages, several high quality halftones.

A most fascinating book, great for background reading, as well as to capture a feeling of what numismatics was like in the past. The anecdotal information, and a nostalgic foreword penned by dealer-collector-numismatist extraordinaire John J. Ford, Jr. make the book an absolute bargain at the \$15-20 level.

Bowers, Q. David, *The Compleat Collector*, Wolfeboro, NH, 1985, 40 pages, half of them cartoon style illustrations by Elll Ford.

A whimsical, often tongue-in-cheek look at the hobby. A great tonic for those of us who often get carried away with coins. At around \$5, this book is must reading.

Bowers, Q. David, *The History of United States Coinage as Illustrated by the Garrett Collection*, Los Angeles, CA, 1979, 572 pages, with extensive black-and-white and color illustrations throughout the text.

What else can be added to the praises already lavished on this book? By far, the finest attempt at a general-reference book yet produced in this country. The Garrett collection provided an incomparable opportunity to produce such a book, and the number of "wonder coins" depicted in its pages can still make the adrenalin flow a little faster. At a price of around \$40, this high quality book can and should be a standard item in any numismatic library. If a collector were to just start assembling a library, I'd strongly suggest that this and Walter Breen's Encyclopedia (listed below) be among the first volumes acquired.

Bowers, Q. David, *The Numismatist's Bedside Companion*, Wolfeboro, NH, 1988, 224 pages, no illustrations.

A collection of twenty-nine articles originally appearing in the pages of the firms *Rare Coin Review*. Interesting reading, and sure to be perused time and time again. Still available from the publisher at under \$10.

Bowers, Q. David, *The Numismatist's Fireside Companion*, Wolfeboro, NH, 224 pages, no illustrations.

A companion volume to the above work, this one reprints twenty six articles, including one penned by famous collector Louis Eliasberg on the formation of his incomparable collection. Also available for under \$10.

Bowers, Q. David, *United States Gold Coins: An Illustrated History*, Bowers and Ruddy Galleries, Los Angeles, CA, 1982, 415 pages, numerous halftone illustrations throughout the text and twenty-four full color plates.

Bowers and Ruddy made numismatic history in 1982 when they sold the incomparable collection of United States gold coins that belonged to the late Louis Eliasberg (although because of contractual agreements, the catalogue was billed as "The United States Gold Coin Collection"). This book is filled with fascinating historical information, and illustrates some of the choicest pieces from that incomparable collection. Pioneer and territorial gold issues are briefly covered. Another must-have book, by one of the most prolific, highly readable authors numismatics has ever known. Still available from Bowers and Merena Galleries at under \$30.

Bowers, Q. David, *Virgil Brand: The Man and His Era*, Bowers and Merena Galleries, Wolfeboro, NH, 1983, 248 pages, numerous halftone illustrations throughout the text.

The story of Virgil Brand, perhaps the greatest coin collector who ever lived, is presented here in great detail, including an abundance of information never before published. Brand, who prior to the publication of this book had a reputation as having been nothing more than a hoarder of rare coins, is revealed to have been a serious, knowledgeable numismatist. The book makes fascinating reading, and is impossible to put down (your author had to read it twice--just to make sure he wasn't missing anything the first time around!). Still available from the publishers at under \$30.

Breen, Walter H. and Gillio, Ronald J., *California Pioneer Fractional Gold. Historic Gold Rush. Small Change 1852-1856, and Suppressed Jewelers' Issues 1859-1882*, Pacific Coast Auction Galleries, 1983, 160 pages extensive halftone illustrations.

Now the standard reference in the field. Extensively researched by Breen, the series is finally broken down into separate periods of issuance, and assigned to various coiners and jewelers. Abundant historical data, including much that has never before been published. The photography is excellent throughout. All in all, a superb reference work. 2,750 copies were printed of the regular soft cover edition. These are available for around \$25-30, and well worth the price. 250 copies were made into deluxe editions, including two color plates and bound in hard covers. These have sold at the \$125 level.

Breen, Walter H., *"A Coiner's Caviar," Walter Breen's Encyclopedia of United States and Colonial Proof Coins, 1722-1977*, FCI Press, Albertson, NY, 1977, 324 pages, extensive halftone illustrations.

The standard reference on proof coinages, this book presents an abundance of historical data and hitherto unpublished information on the proofing process. Photographs of some of the most gorgeous coins imaginable are presented, and all are of uniformly high quality. Pieces known to have once resided (or still impounded in) famous collections are listed, as well as pieces seen by the author in over 30 years of research. Although distributed in quantity, the book has become one of the modern rarities in numismatic literature. Don't expect to find a copy for under \$100. As of this writing, there are rumors that a reprint will soon be released by Bowers and Merena Galleries, but whether the reprint will contain any of the new information amassed by Breen in the last decade remains to be seen.

Breen, Walter H., *Dies and Coinage*, Hewitt's Numismatic Information Series, no date, 36 pages, illustrations.

A well-researched and succinctly written monograph; the first devoted solely to the fields of die making and the coinage process. A treasure trove of information, and a booklet that should be in every numismatists library. Required reading, and at a price of around \$5, easy to obtain.

Breen, Walter H., *The Minting Process. How Coins are Made and Mismade*, Beverly Hills, CA, 1970, 163 pages, halftone illustrations.

A modern rarity. This softbound book consists of twenty-four lessons on coinage, with an emphasis on minting process fundamentals, error coins and blundered dies. At the end of the booklet is a final examination, consisting of 50 questions, that was to be returned and graded by the American Institute of Professional Numismatists, and returned with a diploma if passed. There is a lot of information presented in this book, including much that had not been previously published. Examples of this work are extremely difficult to locate: I have never seen a copy at auction, and the work in my library cost over \$70 a decade ago. If it does appear at auction, it should sell for at least \$50-75.

Breen, Walter H., *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins*, New York, NY, 1988, 754 pages, extensive halftone illustrations throughout the text.

A numismatic classic, even though it's less than two years old. Billed as "The Ultimate Guide to U.S. Coins," this mammoth volume fully lives up to its claims. Breen, one of the foremost numismatists our country has ever seen, spent over ten years writing and thirty years researching this book, and the results speak for themselves. Historical information, as well as rarity, mintage figures, die characteristics and variety information are presented on each and every coin from the earliest colonial issues of 1616 down to the present day. Over 4,000 illustrations, many of them coins from famous collections, depict the vast majority of issues listed. The book's drawbacks are few: some outdated material, especially in the colonial series; the publisher's insistence on placing the photos underneath the descriptions (the opposite of almost all other numismatic publications) and their equally baffling use of numbers for every issue, similar to the Don Taxay work described below (the main drawback with this being that it does not allow for the sequential numbering of new discoveries). Those few negatives are far outweighed by the amazing depth and diversity of the material offered -- the book has justifiably been described as a complete numismatic library between two covers. If you had to limit yourself to just one book a year, this should be the first. Originally published at \$75, the price was quickly discounted to under \$60, and copies can still be had at that level.

Burnie, R. H., *Small California and Territorial Gold Coins. Quarter Dollars, Half Dollars, Dollars*, Pascagoula, MS, 1955, 96 pages, no illustrations.

A controversial monograph, as many of the varieties described by Burnie are not listed elsewhere, and are thought to be nothing more than fantasies of the author's mind. This work does cover the fractional gold pieces that were issued for fairs and expositions from roughly 1900 to 1915. These pieces have not been catalogued elsewhere. The book was issued in black, green and dark blue card covers (if anyone else out there cares, the green and blue are the scarcest variants, while the black is, by far, the most commonly seen), and is available for around \$30.

Buttrey, Theodore V., editor, *Coinage of the Americas*, American Numismatic Society, New York, NY, 1973, 139 pages, scattered halftone illustrations.

An interesting and informative booklet, issued in conjunction with the major exhibition of Western Hemisphere coinage held by the ANS in 1973. The articles of interest to collectors of United States issues are one by Eric P. Newman on colonial issues, and one by Walter Breen on U.S. coinage, which also includes private and territorial gold. Intended more as an overview of as many series as possible, no one series is dealt with in great detail. Still available from the ANS for under \$10, and as it contains articles written by two of our country's leading numismatists, a bargain at that.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

The Brasher Bulletin is accepting ads for publication in the next issue. Only those ads offering to buy and/or sell private and pioneer gold coinage, California small denomination gold coins, gold souvenir tokens, banking and mining scrip, and related numismatic literature will be accepted. Charter members and current dealer patrons receive free space in the Brasher Bulletin. Charges for full-page ads have been set at \$75 per issue, half-page ads are \$40, one-quarter page ads are \$25, and ads of six lines or less \$7.50 per issue. These charges are subject to change as conditions warrant.

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It is the policy of the Editor to respond in print, if appropriate, to any comments made by the members in regard to topics and issues of importance to the Society. This policy also applies to responses to points of view expressed in articles published in the B.B. Comments received in response to recent articles will be forwarded to the authors. All articles are the opinions of the various contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the S.P.P.N. or its officers and members. The Editor encourages letters of comment by interested readers, as a way of improving the quality of the Brasher Bulletin. The Editors wishes to ask that all members participate in writing articles for submission to the B.B. Featured articles, market trends, news and notes, reader surveys, condition census, reports, summaries of auction results, minutes and summaries of Society meetings, and other news items are acceptable topics for publication.

The next deadline for submission of articles, comments or advertising for the next issue of the Brasher Bulletin is March 15, 1990. Please contact the Editor if there are questions concerning style or format of proposed articles.

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Please notify the editor when moving or changing addresses. To avoid unnecessary delays in receiving the newsletter, and to assist the staff in keeping the Society mailing list current, please inform the Editor as soon as possible of any change of address.

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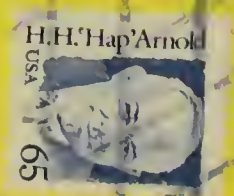
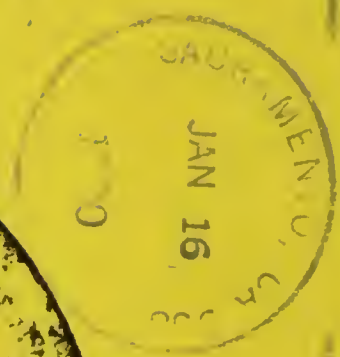
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